

EZEKIEL 1:1-12:28 | THE DESOLATION

EZEKIEL 1:1-3:27 | FIRST VISION (BY CHEBAR)

EZEKIEL 2:1-2 | RAISED BY THE SPIRIT

- Verse 1 –
 - Ezekiel had fallen on his face upon the voice from the throne, undoubtedly the voice of God (v. 1:28). Now he is immediately told to **stand upon thy feet**. This speaks volumes about
 - God calls Ezekiel **Son of man**. The phrase is *ben adam*. In the Old Testament it is always with no definite article. In the New Testament, it contains the definite article, and refers to the Messiah, and is only used when the physical reign is in view. In the Old Testament, it is used of Ezekiel 100 times and of Daniel one time. It appears that the reference is given in contrast to the four living creatures that have been described. In the Daniel usage (Dan. 8:17) the contrast is between Gabriel and Daniel, thus also a “non-human to human” comparison.
- Verse 2 –
 - The **spirit** is presumably the Holy Spirit, but it cannot be certain (thus the KJV rightly chooses the lower-case “s”).

EZEKIEL 2:3-3:9 | MISSION OF EZEKIEL

- Verses 2:3-5 – The People and their Reception
 - Since Ezekiel was sent **to the children of Israel**, we should apply the message to them.
 - Only when a message is general in nature can we give secondary application to ourselves. And, we shall find, few (if any) of the prophecies of Ezekiel are general in nature.
 - Thus we expect, from the beginning, based upon clear and simple words, that Ezekiel is *not a prophecy for America or any other modern people*.
 - Ezekiel was to deliver the message regardless of the response. In either case, they would **know that there hath been a prophet among them**.
- Verses 2:6-8 - Encouragement to Ezekiel
 - It is easy for a man (even a prophet) to **be afraid** of those to whom he speaks, especially when he knows the message will not be readily accepted. Ezekiel was encouraged to be a stalwart mouthpiece even in the face of difficulties, without regard to response.
 - Ezekiel was also warned to avoid the rebellion of the people, then commanded to **eat that I give thee**.
- Verses 2:9-3:3 - Take and Eat
 - Jeremiah had previously been told to take **a roll of a book** and to write **all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel** (Jer. 36:2).
 - Likely the **roll of a book** in verse 9 contains the same words.
 - Notice that Jeremiah and Ezekiel seem to be connected in a “prophetic chain” (see note, Ezek. 1:1).
 - This could also be the same scroll as Revelation 5:1, since both are **written within and without** (v. 10). Ezekiel was to **eat that roll** (Ezek. 3:2).
 - When he ate it, **it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness**.
 - John also had this experience in Revelation 10:10.
 - In Psalm 19:10 and Psalm 119:103 the word of God is sweet. This must be true even when the words are **lamentations, and mourning, and woe** (Ezek. 2:10).
- Verses 3:4-7 - The people and their reception (corresponding response to Ezek. 2:3-5)

- The phrase **house of Israel** (v 4, along with others) is one of the *Massorah*, or *fences* that the Jews used to keep the text pure. The scribes knew exactly how many times the phrase occurred in the Hebrew Scriptures. The scribes would take a finished scroll and count these occurrences as an audit of the text's perfection.
- Ezekiel is to **speak with my words** (v. 4). The Bible was not written by *inspired men* but with *inspired words*.
- Ezekiel is not sent to a foreign people (in fact, he is living amongst a foreign people as an exile). His message is toward God's people, even though the audience is **impudent and hardhearted**. Impudence is *shamelessness*.
- God says that **had I sent thee to them (the people of a strange speech...) they would have hearkened unto thee**. Indeed, Nebuchadnezzar, upon hearing the words of Daniel, said, **Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings...** (Dan. 2:47).
- Verses 3:8-9 - Encouragement to Ezekiel (corresponding response to Ezekiel 2:6-8).
 - God encourages Ezekiel by reminding him that He had **made thy face strong**. The word **strong** is קָזַק [hazak], and is embedded in the name *Ezekiel*, which means "God is my strength."
 - *Note*: Be careful not to want all people to be *soft*. Sometimes God has given people a forehead **harder than flint** (v. 9) in order to accomplish His will.

EZEKIEL 3:10-23 | THE CHERUBIM

- These verses are the corresponding response to Ezekiel 1:1-28 (see graphic).
- Verses 10-11 - The Command
 - Ezekiel was to take **all my words**. He would indeed be faithful.
 - Much of the church today is guilty of *taking from* the words of God by neglect (or outright denial), *adding to* the word of God by assumption of theology that is not actually present in the words, or *changing* the words of God by spiritualizing, allegorizing, or misapplying.
- Verses 12-13 - The Hand of Jehovah
 - The identity/meaning of **the spirit** is open to interpretation. This spirit lifted Ezekiel up and must have turned him around, for he **heard a behind me a voice**. The vision was from the north (Ezek. 1:4), so he presumably now is facing south.
 - From verse 13, it appears that the vision is now departing, and, with Ezekiel's back turned, he only heard **the noise** of the departing platform.
 - Ezekiel **went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit**, though we are not sure if he is bitter and angry about being left or about his assignment, or about the stubborn spirit of Israel, or something else.
- Verses 15-21 - Ezekiel's Obedience
 - Ezekiel goes to the captives at **Tel-abib**. This is the source of the name of the modern city *Tel Aviv*. A *tel* is a rubbish heap of civilizations and *abib* (or *aviv*) is the month of the spring harvest, thus a mix of old and new.
 - For seven days Ezekiel **sat where they sat**. The word **sat** is the same as **dwelt** in the same verse. It does not imply literally sitting for seven days.
 - At the end of this seven day period, Ezekiel was given his famous watchman on the wall instruction. Unfortunately, many preachers have used this to guilt Christians into joining the evangelism ministry. What God requires of Ezekiel is not what He requires of all men. Furthermore, Ezekiel is not sharing the *good news* but rather the *bad news* of judgement and the *hard news* of works based righteousness. The one who sees the Pauline Gospel of *by grace through faith not of works* in this passage is simply imagining things that are not there.

A	C 1:1-28-. The Cherubim.
	D 1:28. Prostration of Ezekiel.
	E 2:1, 2. Raised by the Spirit.
	F 2:3-3:9. Mission of Ezekiel.
C	3:10-23-. The Cherubim.
	D 3:23. Prostration of Ezekiel.
	E 3:24-. Raised by the Spirit.
	F 3:24-27. Mission of Ezekiel.